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lish, through Chancellor's expedition to the White Sea in 1553, opened up the northern sea route. Ivan was also conscious of the economic advantages of owning a Baltic port and began operations against the Livonian order of German knights which controlled both the Gulf of Riga and the Gulf of Finland. After capturing Narva, he founded the Russian navy a century and a quarter before Peter the Great by confiscating and arming a number of German merchant vessels, for which he employed German and Swedish officers as commanders. Ivan's early successes proved a boomerang, however, since the Livonian order was dissolved and Esthonia was turned over to Sweden. This event automatically produced a collision with that country, allied with Lithuania, so that war became incessant on the western front until Ivan's death in 1584.

By that date the formation and the future policy of modern Russia was clearly defined. It was a foregone conclusion that future Russian sovereigns would extend Russian territory to the Black Sea. It was only a question of time when the weakening of Poland and Lithuania would bring the Dnieper valley and White Russia under Muscovite sway. It had become a cardinal item of Russian policy to control the Finnish Gulf, and maritime commerce with the west would traverse those waters as soon as ports were either conquered or developed. The long period of Russian isolation from Europe was ended, and the difficult process of acquiring modern European techniques was about to begin. Russia had graduated from oriental domination and was on its way to becoming a major European power, never to approach the East again, save in the hope of conquest.

In view of the gradual evolution of Muscovite sovereignty, it is important to understand also the origins of autocracy in Moscow itself. For autocracy was by no means inevitable or universal in medieval Russia, and in the principality of Kiev the early princes had always had to reckon with town assemblies which supervised and even frequently deposed them. The influence of these assemblies was large in any medieval Russian city of which the economic and political status had been deter-

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mined independently of the princes, for one can appreciate that normal life went on even when princes shifted through inheritance or dynastic quarrels.

As a matter of fact in Novgorod, which was comparatively remote from either Kiev or Vladimir-Suzdal, the resident princes were merely delegates of the dominant state which momentarily enjoyed the lordship over the northern metropolis, but these resident princes changed so often that the citizens began to choose elective burgomasters early in the twelfth century. Eventually the princes surrendered even their control of the local courts, and in the course of time the whole administration of Novgorod and the areas it controlled became elective. The resident prince was thus transformed into a mere figurehead whose chief duty was to lead the military forces of this city-state. Popular sovereignty was expressed in the city assembly made up of all free citizens of whatever rank, and since this body was able to signify its will only by acclamation and sometimes even by pitched battles, the executive functions were exercised by a council composed of the bishop and various high elected officials, whether active or retired. The outlying domains of Novgorod—for eventually the republic colonized the territory as far as the White Sea and the Kola peninsula—enjoyed a considerable degree of autonomy, but always under the surveillance of a viceroy from the metropolis, though there are cases where citizens of these colonies participated in the city assembly at Novgorod itself. Pskov began its historical career as a dependency of Novgorod, but established its independence in 1347, when the men of Novgorod bound themselves by treaty not to send any viceroy to Pskov or to exercise any further judicial rights there.

The republican principle thrived in Novgorod and Pskov because actually the princes had contributed nothing to the civic and economic growth of these areas, which owed their expansion purely to the energy of their own citizens. But in northeastern Russia the situation was quite different. There, of the two dominant forces in contemporary society (the city assembly